

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 21-28, and 30 are now pending in the application. Claims 21-28 and 30 are no longer deemed allowable. Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 21-28, and 30 stand rejected. Claim 9 has been cancelled; and Claims 1, 3, 5, and 21 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the application, drawings and claims as originally filed and, as such, no new matter has been presented. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 1 stands objected to because of the informality that “which slots” is considered grammatical incorrect. Claim 9 stands objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claims 3 and 5 are objected to because they recite the limitation “said plurality of slots,” which has insufficient antecedent basis. Applicant has amended Claims 1, 3, 5, and 9 to overcome these objections. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of these objections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 21-28, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huck (U.S. Pat. No. 2,030,169) in view of Palm (U.S. Pat. No. 5,183,357). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner's attention is directed to independent Claims 1 and 21. These claims have been amended to include the limitations that the expandable portion has a smooth interior, and that the expandable portion defines three through slots. Further, these claims have been amended to include the limitation that the slots form a single triangular aperture having flat sides. Applicant submits the references do not teach or suggest these limitations.

While Applicant acknowledges the Palm reference teaches an expandable body having three slots, Palm does not teach an expandable portion with a smooth interior. In this regard, Applicant notes that the interior body is threaded and, therefore, not smooth. Further, while Palm may suggest through slots, it does not disclose the configuration as claimed.

Applicant further submits that Palm does not teach a single triangular aperture defining through slots and having flat sides. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to Figures 8 and 9 of Palm which show curved surfaces. As such, Applicant submits the references do not teach these limitations.

Fig. 8

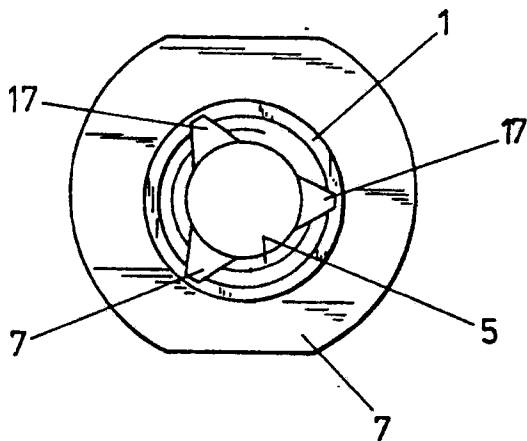
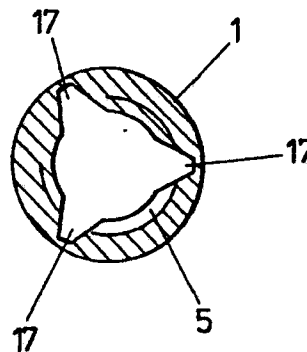


Fig. 9




CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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